

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Louisiana Summary

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that assists producers in solving problems. To date, NRCS has assisted producers in preparing 4,803 contracts that include conservation practices to solve identified resource problems on their farms. EQIP provides financial assistance to farmers willing to implement conservation practices and address the major resource concerns for the least cost to the government.

Local work groups developed 94 Geographic Priority Areas (GPA) project proposals. NRCS in Louisiana has provided funds to the 13 highest-ranking GPA. Of all financial dollars allocated to the State, 65 percent is allocated to GPA and the rest to statewide resource concern applications. The NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee develops the ranking criteria for GPA proposed and for individual applications.

Accomplishments

Over 600 contracts for almost \$2.5 million were developed on 80,927 acres in FY 2000. They assist farmers in addressing resource concerns to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.

Customer Focus

Eddie Jude Lewis, Sr., has farmed in south Louisiana for 40 years. He is a sugarcane producer who operates a 2,750-acre farm, in Lafayette, Iberia, and Vermilion Parishes. Mr. Lewis has participated in EQIP since it began in 1997, installing grade stabilization structures (pipedrops) and agronomic practices for erosion control. "Growing sugarcane is unique," explained Lewis. "You need special equipment and in many cases large equipment to harvest the cane. The pipedrops installed on my farms have really helped eliminate small gullies or washouts that occur at the ends of our drains. Not only are the washouts costly in terms of soil erosion, they can also damage our equipment. EQIP has helped reduce erosion and equipment damage, not to mention improving the water quality of the bayous in our area." Lewis' wife, Lilly Mae, takes care of accounting duties; their daughter Karen, does the secretarial work; and their sons, Kenry, Eddie, Jr., and Wayne help with other farm duties.

Every year, the Vermilion Soil and Water Conservation District recognizes one farmer, cattle producer, or other landowner for outstanding work in soil and water conservation. In 1999, Lewis was selected as the District Cooperator of the Year. "Being selected as conservation farmer of the year was a real honor for me," said Lewis. "The Vermilion Conservation District has helped farmers a lot through the years. District and NRCS personnel have helped plan and install many EQIP practices, and I am grateful for that assistance."

Outlook

The FY 2001 EQIP in Louisiana promises to be as equally productive as the previous year. To date, 21 applications for GPA have been submitted for funding in FY 2001. Several commodity groups, farm organizations, and Federal, State, and local agencies are requesting that more funds become available to NRCS to strengthen the EQIP program.

State Contact

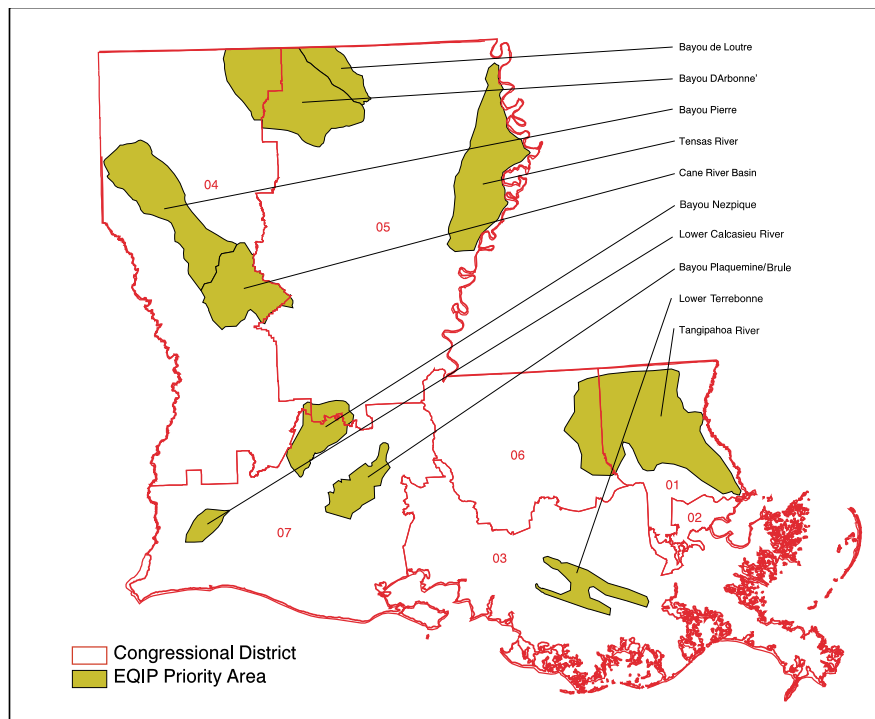
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Triple "L" Farms
Eddie Jude Lewis, Sr., Lilly Mae,
Karen, Kenry, Eddie, Jr., and
Wayne

Eddie Jude Lewis, Sr.



Louisiana EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



Louisiana EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 0	\$855,338	289	\$7,895,811	3,562
District 1	128,917	27	368,554	90
District 2				
District 3	166,139	76	324,112	204
District 4	343,013	59	1,319,158	291
District 5	406,477	66	1,843,571	306
District 6	7,104	1	91,716	14
District 7	557,920	96	2,101,917	336
State Totals	\$2,464,908	614	\$13,944,839	4,803

Note: EQIP contracts for each Congressional District are estimated from Conservation Priority Areas, which may include more than one district.

Congressional District 0 = EQIP Contracts for Statewide Natural Resource Concerns, which can be in any Congressional District in the state.

Source: FSA Recordset type01, data through 4th quarter FY2000

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